

REMARKS

Prior to entry of this Amendment, claims 1-40 were pending in the present application. Claims 1, 3, 11, 12, 14, 17, 20, 35, and 38 are amended above. New claims 41-44 are added above. Claim 39 is canceled above. No new matter is added. Entry is respectfully requested.

The Applicants note that the Office Action Summary does not indicate whether the drawings filed in the application are acceptable. Confirmation of their acceptability is respectfully requested.

The Applicants further note that receipt of Part II of the electronic Information Disclosure Statement filed January 16, 2004 has not yet been acknowledged in the application. The Applicants respectfully request that an initialed copy of the submitted document be included with the next official paper transmitted by the Office as confirmation of receipt of the Information Disclosure Statement, and as confirmation of consideration of the listed references.

The Applicant notes, with appreciation, that the Office Action indicates at page 6, paragraph 5, that claims 10, 14, and 35 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and if rewritten in independent form, and further that claim 32 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. New claim 41 incorporates the limitations of former claim 1 and claim 10, and is written to address the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejection of former claims 1-19. New claim 42 incorporates the limitations of former claims 1 and 14, and intervening claims 12 and 13, and is written to address the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejection of former claims 1-19. New claim 43 incorporates the limitations of former claim 20 and claim 32. New claim 44 incorporates the limitations of former claims 20 and 35, and intervening claims 33 and 34, and is written to address the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejection of former claim 35. Entry and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-19 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph for reasons

stated in the Office Action. The claims are amended above in a manner that addresses and overcomes the rejections. Entry of the amendments and removal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 20-27, 33, 34, 36, 38, and 40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Lin (U.S. Patent No. 6,341,401). Claims 1-9, 11-13, 15-17, 19, 21-31, 33, 34, and 36-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lin in view of Graham (U.S. Patent No. 5,331,706). Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lin in view of Graham and in further view of Mayfield (U.S. Patent No. 6,170,112). Claim 39 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lin in view of Mayfield. Reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

With regard to the rejection of claims 20-27, 33, 34, 36, 38, and 40 as being anticipated by Lin, it is submitted that Lin fails to teach or suggest the present invention as claimed in amended independent claim 20.

In particular, Lin fails to teach or suggest “an adjustable-length pole”, as claimed in claim 20. In Lin, the pole is fixed in length.

Further, Lin fails to teach or suggest “the coupler limiting lateral rotation of the body relative to the pole, while permitting rotation of the body relative to the pole in another direction of rotation”, as claimed in claim 20. Limitation of lateral rotation of the body relative to the pole is illustrated for example as arrows 76 of FIG. 4B of the present specification as filed, and is described for example, at least at page 8, lines 13-15 of the present specification as filed. Instead, Lin includes a universal ball-and-socket joint 20 between the pole 11 and mop head 14, and a lock nut collar 30 for locking the universal joint 20 when the pole 11 is in proper position. The Lin configuration therefore does not teach or suggest a coupler that limits “lateral rotation of the body relative to the pole, while permitting rotation of the body relative to the pole in another direction of rotation”, as claimed in claim 20. Instead, in Lin, the Lin pole 11 can freely rotate

relative to the mop head 14 in the lateral direction. While the Lin lock nut collar 30 might be considered to limit such rotation when the lock nut collar 30 is tightened, in this case, the underlined portion of the limitation of “the coupler limiting lateral rotation of the body relative to the pole, while permitting rotation of the body relative to the pole in another direction of rotation,” (emphasis added) as claimed in claim 20, is not met, since, when the Lin lock nut collar 30 is tightened, no such rotation is permitted.

Accordingly reconsideration and removal of the rejection of claim 20 as being anticipated by Lin are respectfully requested. With regard to dependent claims 21-27, 33, 34, 36, 38, and 40, it follows that these claims should inherit the allowability of the independent claim from which they depend.

With regard to the rejection of claims 21-31, 33, 34, and 36-38 as being obvious over the combination of Lin and Graham, it is submitted that Graham, like Lin, fails to teach or suggest “an adjustable-length pole” and “the coupler limiting lateral rotation of the body relative to the pole, while permitting rotation of the body relative to the pole in another direction of rotation”, as claimed in claim 20. Therefore, the combination fails to teach or suggest this feature. Accordingly reconsideration and removal of the rejection of claims 21-31, 33, 34, and 36-38 are respectfully requested.

With regard to the rejection of claim 39 as being obvious over the combination of Lin and Mayfield, it is submitted that Mayfield, like Lin, fails to teach or suggest “the coupler limiting lateral rotation of the body relative to the pole, while permitting rotation of the body relative to the pole in another direction of rotation”. Therefore, the combination fails to teach or suggest this feature. Accordingly reconsideration and removal of the rejection of claim 39 are respectfully requested.

With regard to the rejection of claims 1-9, 11-13, 15-17, 19 as being obvious over the combination of Lin and Graham, it is submitted that the combination of Lin and Graham fails to

teach or suggest the present invention as claimed in amended independent claim 1. In particular, the combination of Lin and Graham fails to teach or suggest that “the coupling position” of the coupler is adjustable “over a range of positions” relative to the longitudinal axis of the body, as claimed in claim 1. As stated in the Office Action at page 5, lines 2-4, Lin fails to teach or suggest adjustable positioning of the Lin coupler. Graham is cited in the Office Action at page 5, lines 5-13 as teaching an adjustable coupler. However, while the end portion 35 of the Graham latch hook 20, in combination with the housing 12, undergoes a slight amount of sliding relative to sponge mop 24 during engagement, there is only a single coupling position for the housing 12 relative to the longitudinal axis of the body of the mop 24, as shown in FIG. 4 of Graham. Therefore, Graham, like Lin, fails to teach or suggest a mount that includes a coupler wherein the “coupling position of the coupler” is “adjustable over a range of positions relative to the longitudinal axis of the body”, as claimed in claim 1.

Accordingly reconsideration and removal of the rejection of claim 1 as being anticipated by Lin are respectfully requested. With regard to dependent claims 2-9, 11-13, 15-17, and 19 it follows that these claims should inherit the allowability of the independent claim from which they depend.

With regard to the rejection of claim 18 as being obvious over the combination of Lin, Graham and Mayfield, it is submitted that Mayfield, like Lin and Graham fails to teach or suggest a coupler wherein the “coupling position of the coupler” is “adjustable over a range of positions relative to the longitudinal axis of the body”. Therefore, the combination fails to teach or suggest this feature. Accordingly reconsideration and removal of the rejection of claim 39 are respectfully requested.

Closing Remarks

It is submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested. If prosecution of the application can be expedited by a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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